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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4625th meeting

Wednesday, 16 October 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Belinga Eboutou	(Cameroon)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 10 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1132).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-64196 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 10 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1132)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Yemen, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) and Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) took seats at the Council table; Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Cappagli (Argentina), Mr. Dauth (Australia), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. de Moura (Brazil), Mr. Heinbecker (Canada), Mr. Valdés (Chile), Mr. Stagno (Costa Rica), Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba), Ms. Loj (Denmark), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Nambiar (India), Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Haraguchi (Japan), Mr. Al-Hussein (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Diab (Lebanon), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Bennouna (Morocco), Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal), Mr. MacKay (New Zealand), Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria), Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman), Mr. Akram (Pakistan), Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Fall (Senegal), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Staehelin (Switzerland), Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand), Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia), Mr. Pamir (Turkey), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine), Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates), Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau (Viet Nam) and Mr. Alsaidi (Yemen) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 15 October 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which was issued as document S/2002/1147, and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held on Wednesday, 16 October 2002, on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the current debate in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 14 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

> "In accordance with article 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, I have the honour to request the participation of His Excellency Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, in the discussion of the agenda item under consideration by the Council on Iraq, which will start on 16 October 2002."

This letter has been published as a document of the Security Council (S/2002/1140).

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Mahmassani.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Mahmassani to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

I should like to inform the Council that I have also received a letter dated 15 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

> "In my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group, I have the honour to request that Ambassador Mokhtar Lamani, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, be allowed to participate in the debate in the Security Council on the item entitled 'The situation between Iraq and Kuwait', in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council."

This letter will be issued as a document of the Security Council (S/2002/1148). If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Mokhtar Lamani.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Lamani to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting today in response to the request contained in a letter dated 10 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations (document S/2002/1132).

I welcome the presence in our midst of the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Louise Fréchette, whom I invite to take the floor.

Ms. Fréchette: As you know, the Secretary-General very much wished to attend this debate in person, but is unable to do so because of his commitment to visit a number of Member States in Asia this week. He is, however, very anxious to give the Council the benefit of his views on an issue of such great importance. Exceptionally, therefore, he has asked me to read you the following statement on his behalf:

> "I applaud you for holding this open debate on Iraq, and much regret that I cannot be with you in person.
>
> "The situation created by Iraq's failure to comply fully with the resolutions of this Council since 1991 is indeed one of the gravest and most serious facing the international community today.
>
> "It poses a great challenge to this Organization, and in particular to the Security Council. In Article 24 of the Charter, the Member States have conferred primary responsibility on this Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.
>
> "That is a grave responsibility indeed, and it is essential that the Council face up to it.
>
> "But let me add that the situation also presents the United Nations with an opportunity. If we handle this properly, we may actually strengthen international cooperation, the rule of law and the United Nations — enabling it to move forward in an purposeful way, not only in this immediate crisis but in the future as well.
>
> "It is therefore entirely proper that the Council should debate its course of action, not only in private consultations but also only in public, so that Member States not currently serving on the Council may have an opportunity to give their views. For myself, I stated my views on this matter very clearly on 12 September, when I had the honour to address the General Assembly. The Council may recall that on that occasion I said that efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the Council's resolutions must continue. I appeal to all who might have influence with Iraq's leaders to impress on them the vital importance of accepting the weapons inspections. I myself urged Iraq to comply with its obligations, for the sake of its own people and for the sake of world order. In his speech in the general debate on the same day, the President of the United States also insisted that Iraq must comply with its obligations under the Council's

resolutions, and a large number of other States joined in that appeal.

"Four days later, I received a letter from the Iraqi Foreign Minister informing me of his Government's decision 'to allow the return of the United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq without conditions'. Since then, Mr. Hans Blix, Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohammed ElBaradei, met with an Iraqi delegation on 30 September and 1 October to discuss the practical arrangements for the resumption of inspections. Iraq's decision to readmit the inspectors without condition is an important first step, but only a first step.

"Full compliance remains indispensable, and it has not yet happened. Iraq has to comply. It must implement the disarmament programme required by the resolutions of the Council. Weapons inspectors will be returning to Iraq after a four-year absence, under a new structure and new leadership, to verify the implementation of that programme. The inspectors must have unfettered access, and the Council will expect nothing less. It may well choose to pass a new resolution strengthening the inspectors' hands so that there are no weaknesses or ambiguities. I consider that such a step would be appropriate. The new measures must be firm, effective, credible and reasonable. If Iraq fails to make use of this last chance, and if defiance continues, the Council will have to face its responsibilities. In my experience it always does so best and most effectively when its members work in unison.

"Let me therefore conclude by urging the President and his colleagues to make every effort to retain their unity of purpose. If you allow yourselves to be divided, the authority and credibility of the Organization will undoubtedly suffer; but if you act in unison, you will have greater impact and a better chance of achieving your objective, which must be a comprehensive solution that includes the suspension and eventual ending of the sanctions that are causing such hardship for the Iraqi people, as well as the timely implementation of other provisions of your resolutions. If the Council succeeds in this, it will strengthen the United Nations in a way that will place future generations in its debt."

The President (*spoke in French*): I wish to inform members of the Council that I intend to suspend the meeting at 1 p.m. and to resume punctually at 3 p.m. I also wish to point out that at this meeting the Council will first hear from non-members of the Council.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): It is always a pleasure to see you preside over the Security Council, Mr. President. We are also pleased that Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Fréchette, has also joined us this morning. We particularly wish to express our appreciation for the Security Council's positive response to our request for an emergency meeting on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. We are pleased by the decision of the Council to begin this meeting by first hearing the views of the wider United Nations membership.

We come before the Council because we believe that the Council is being asked to consider a matter that has important repercussions for the entire United Nations. According to the Preamble to the Charter, the United Nations was founded with the explicit determination "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". We are here to voice our concerns regarding the possibility that the United Nations is now being asked to consider proposals that open up the possibility of a war against a Member State.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait must be addressed comprehensively by the United Nations so as to allow the Security Council to lift sanctions against Iraq, which continue to have dire humanitarian consequences. Iraq should comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, including the provisions relating to the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and the return of all Kuwaiti property. All Member States are bound by Security Council resolutions, and no Member should be exempted from carrying out obligations as determined by the Council.

We therefore welcome the announcement by the Government of Iraq to allow United Nations weapons inspectors to return without any conditions. We believe

this offers the prospect for a peaceful resolution of this matter. We would urge the Security Council to allow the inspectors to return to Iraq as soon as possible.

We called for this meeting to offer our encouragement to the Security Council to seize this opportunity, which could possibly lead to a lasting peaceful solution to the long-standing matter between Iraq and Kuwait.

During the general debate of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement were seized with the debate on Iraq. They welcomed the decision by the Government of Iraq to allow the unconditional return of weapons inspectors in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. They further stated that

> "in this regard, we wish to encourage Iraq and the United Nations to intensify their efforts in search of a lasting, just and comprehensive solution to all outstanding issues between them in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions."

The Ministers reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq and Kuwait, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. They emphasized the need for a peaceful solution of the issue of Iraq in a way that preserves the authority and credibility of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as peace and stability in the region. The Ministers also reiterated the Non-Aligned Movement's firm rejection of any type of unilateral action against any Member State of the United Nations.

We welcome the agreement of 1 October 2002 between the Government of Iraq, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the practical arrangements necessary for the immediate resumption of inspections, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The timetable for the return of the inspectors that has been presented to the Security Council by Mr. Hans Blix, Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, and Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the IAEA, is also welcomed. It would therefore be inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter if the Security Council were to authorize the use of military force against Iraq at a time when Iraq has indicated its willingness to abide by the Security Council's resolutions.

In our view, the way has now been cleared for the immediate return of the United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq. We have full confidence that Mr. Blix and the United Nations inspectors will undertake their duties with utmost professionalism. We hope that the Security Council shares our confidence in the abilities and credibility of UNMOVIC and the IAEA in carrying out this task. We urge the Council to allow the United Nations inspectors to return to Iraq to resume their important work without delay. It would be tragic if the Council were to prejudge the work of the inspectors before they set foot in Iraq. There will be enough time for the Council to review the work of the inspectors since Mr. Blix and his team are required to report progress to the Council.

We have followed with interest the public discussion on the elements for a possible resolution on Iraq. It has been brought to our attention that the significant consultations are limited to the permanent members of the Security Council and their capitals. There have even been suggestions that permanent members should be given new and exclusive roles in dealing with the resolution of the Iraqi issue.

It has always been a source of comfort and satisfaction for those of us who are not in the Security Council that there are ten elected members who we chose to represent our views. We believe that these elected members have their own special role to play in the Council's deliberations, because they bring credibility and balance to decision-making within the Council. We are therefore concerned if elected members are excluded from consultations on the most pressing issues before the Council. This is can only lead to the erosion of the authority and legitimacy of the Security Council as a whole.

The Security Council represents our collective security concerns and should ultimately be accountable to the entire United Nations. The maintenance of international peace and security is a core function of the United Nations. Therefore, the Security Council cannot be party to increasing the humanitarian suffering of civilians who are caught up in conflict situations. Nor can the Council allow itself to agree to decisions that will subject and condemn large numbers of innocent civilians to conditions of war in efforts to enforce its resolutions. Through the United Nations

Charter, we adopted a system of collective security, and we now have to act with resolve to protect our rules-based system of international relations. The norms and fundamental principles of international law must be our basis to establish the conditions for peace, justice and human dignity.

The Security Council should ensure that there is consistency in the way it acts to enforce its own decisions and avoid subjectivity and vagueness in its resolutions. The Council should be explicit and clearly define the objectives of its resolutions and set clear, implementable benchmarks for compliance. This would facilitate the efforts by Member States to fully comply with their obligations.

Open-ended sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council are counterproductive insofar as they exacerbate the humanitarian situation. In Iraq, 11 years of sanctions have brought endless suffering to the ordinary people. We hope that the Security Council will dispatch the inspectors to Iraq as soon as possible and allow the people of Iraq to focus their attention on rebuilding their country.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of South Africa for the kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Iraq, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to express to you our congratulations on your assumption to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are confident that African wisdom will certainly help crown the deliberations of the Council with success under your leadership.

We would also like to express our thanks and gratitude to the friendly State of South Africa for its initiative on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on requesting the convening of this meeting to give a chance to the Members States of the United Nations to express their views on this matter, which is not only about relations between Iraq and the Security Council, but also about international relations in general. It is also a matter that relates to the capacity of the international community to face up to the American tendency to practice hegemony and aggression, and to stand steadfastly by the principles of the United Nations Charter. We hope that the Security Council will take the views that we will hear today and tomorrow into account.

The deterioration in international relations has reached a point where the American Administration unabashedly declares its plans to invade and occupy Iraq, using military force and even appointing an American governor, therein changing the map of the region by force and putting their hands on the sources of energy there. The United States also wants the Security Council to give it a blank cheque to colonize Iraq, not just Iraq but the entire Arab Mashrq, which it plans to violate as part of its plan to subject the entire world to American hegemony. The United States of America has taken advantage of illegal means of pressure and a tremendous propaganda mechanism to disseminate lies concerning Iraq, one lie after the other, the latest being the pretence that Iraq owns weapons of mass destruction and the alleged threat of such weapons to world security.

I believe that everyone knows that there are no nuclear, chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and that Iraq implemented many years ago the disarmament requirements set out in paragraphs 8 to 13 of resolution 687 (1991). This has been recognized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has declared that there are no pending issues concerning disarmament in Iraq. The United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) also recognized that fact. Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, the former Executive Chairman of UNSCOM, declared on 13 January 1993 that Iraq had implemented 95 per cent of its obligations, an assertion that he repeated in an interview for the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation on 7 September 2002.

I should like to beg the Security Council's indulgence in describing in depth Iraq's implementation of resolution 687 (1991) over the past seven years and seven months. Suffice it to say that 276 inspection teams, made up of a total of 3,845 inspectors, in addition to 80 delegations in the form of special missions, undertook 3,392 visits to Iraqi sites. Among these teams were 94 teams specializing in meetings and interviews, which met for a total of 2,359 hours with 1,378 people connected directly or indirectly with Iraq's previous programmes. There were 192 monitoring teams involving 1,332 inspectors who undertook 10,256 inspection visits to sites subject to the monitoring system, as well as other sites. Although 595 sites were subject to monitoring pursuant

to the mechanism for monitoring Iraqi exports and imports under resolution 1051 (1996), 74 sites were added, including in border and customs areas, harbours, hospitals and health centres.

UNSCOM and IAEA used 140 surveillance cameras at 29 sites and 30 sensors at 23 sites, as well as 1,929 labels on 1,832 facilities and pieces of equipment in monitoring 161 sites. UNSCOM placed 9,026 labels on 99 types of missile with a range of less than seven kilometres. UNSCOM and IAEA also undertook 2,967 helicopter sorties in their work, for a total of 4,480 flight hours. The United States undertook 434 U-2 surveillance sorties for a total of 1,800 flight hours. Iraq submitted 1,744,000 pages of documents to UNSCOM and IAEA, along with a number of videotapes and nine kilometres of microfilm, containing 600,000 pictures and 50,000 microfilm slides.

All of this demonstrates to the Security Council that Iraq has honoured all its requirements, despite the many harmful and insulting practices of the inspection units, including the espionage carried out by the American and British inspectors, in particular, in implementation of the well-known plots and plans devised by the United States to maintain the embargo and to jeopardize Iraqi national security. This was recognized by many inspectors, UNSCOM Executive Chairman Ekeus and the chief United States inspector Scott Ritter among them.

Iraq has consented to all these sacrifices in the hope that its cooperation would lead the Security Council to honour its obligations under resolution 687 (1991). Foremost among those obligations are lifting the comprehensive embargo imposed on Iraq, ensuring respect for Iraq's national security, and addressing the regional security imbalance embodied in Israel's possession of a vast arsenal of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, long-range missiles and their delivery systems. However, when the United States sensed that the pretext of inspections had become an inadequate excuse for maintaining the comprehensive embargo and for repeated American and British aggressions, it asked the inspection team led by Mr. Butler to leave Iraq on 15 December 1998. In other words, the inspectors did not leave because Iraq asked them to, but because Mr. Butler asked them to do so, as instructed by the United States.

One day after the inspectors left Iraq, there was a vast military attack against Iraq, which claimed the lives of hundreds of Iraqi citizens and destroyed several economic and service institutions, including sites that had been under the surveillance and monitoring of UNSCOM and the IAEA.

Following that, the United States dragged the Security Council along a very long and complex path of discussions in order to redraft Council resolutions, impose new conditions on Iraq and set up new inspection committees, believing that the continued absence of inspectors justified continuing the embargo, which would mean that one day the Iraqi people would kneel to the will of the United States.

Thus, the inspectors left Iraq and the overall embargo continued from 6 August 1990, claiming the lives of Iraqi citizens, so much so that the number of embargo victims has reached 1,750,000 Iraqi citizens, as of the end of September of this year.

The embargo continues to represent a moral problem for the United Nations, as described by the Secretary-General. It also is a blatant violation of several provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, such as Article 24, which calls for the Security Council to work in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter. It is also a violation of Article 1, paragraph 1, which states that sanctions and other measures adopted for the maintenance of international peace and security should be in keeping with the principles of international law and justice.

The sanctions are a violation of Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Charter, which deals with respect for the principle of equality among peoples — their equal rights and their right to self-determination — since no sanctions should be imposed that will cause international disagreements that are incompatible with the legal rights of the State or that prejudice the people's right to self-determination.

The sanctions are also a violation of Article 1, paragraph 3 of the Charter, which concerns the promotion of and respect for human rights.

The system of sanctions also violates Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter, which does not allow the United Nations to intervene in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State.

Sanctions also go against Article 55 of the Charter, which calls upon the United Nations to guarantee higher standards of living for all people and to work towards economic and social progress and development. We do not want to dwell at length on the fact that they are also a violation of many other international conventions and instruments on human rights.

All this has been documented by United Nations agencies, humanitarian organizations, human rights organizations and many researchers and writers in this area. The sanctions imposed on Iraq have caused a humanitarian catastrophe comparable to the worst catastrophes that have befallen the world throughout history. The sanctions have claimed the lives of thousands of children, women and elderly people. They constitute genocide by any standard; the number of victims goes far beyond the victims of the use of weapons of mass destruction throughout history.

Parallel to the imposition of the comprehensive embargo, since April of 1991 the United States and Britain have declared two no-fly zones in the south and north of Iraq, in blatant violation of the Charter and the established rules of international law, as well as the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, which have underlined the importance of respecting Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

By imposing those no-fly zones, the United States and Britain have carried out military aggression continuously, killing thousands of Iraqi citizens and destroying property. Those two States are violating daily the resolutions of the Security Council and carrying out continuous aggression against Iraq. The Council has been unable to put an end to such aggression or even to condemn it.

In order to end the impasse in the situation with the Security Council, Iraq took the initiative of opening a dialogue with the Secretary-General, with the aim of achieving full implementation of the obligations contained in resolutions of the Council in a balanced and equitable manner and in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Iraqi side held four meetings with the Secretary-General which led to some progress but which did not achieve their objective. This was due to pressure by the United States, which prevented the Council from participating in the efforts to seek a comprehensive solution that would deal with all aspects of the relationship between Iraq and the Council while guaranteeing the implementation of all the requirements of the Council's resolutions — I repeat, guaranteeing the implementation of all requirements of the Security Council.

This American position actually means that a comprehensive solution would not serve the aggressive intentions of the United States against Iraq and the region as a whole. That is the very reason which has led the United States to prevent the Security Council from examining the possibility of implementing operative paragraph 6 of the Council's resolution 1382 (2001). This paragraph calls on the Security Council to reach a comprehensive settlement concerning the relationship between Iraq and the Council, including clarification concerning the implementation of resolution 1284 (1999).

In response to the calls and appeals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Arab States and many friendly countries, the Iraqi Government on 16 September 2002 agreed, unconditionally, to the return of United Nations weapons inspectors, in order to dissipate any doubts concerning Iraq's continued possession of weapons of mass destruction, and as a first step towards a solution that would include lifting the overall embargo imposed on Iraq and implementing the other provisions of relevant Security Council resolutions.

In his letter dated 16 September 2002, the Secretary-General conveyed to the President of the Security Council Iraq's agreement and mentioned the following:

> "As I had the honour to mention to the General Assembly a few days ago, this decision by the Government of the Republic of Iraq is the indispensable first step towards an assurance that Iraq no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction and, equally important, towards a comprehensive solution that includes the suspension and eventual ending of the sanctions that are causing such hardship for the Iraqi people and the timely implementation of other provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions." (*S/2002/1034, p. 1*)

The Iraqi technical delegation held talks in Vienna on 30 September and 1 October 2002 with delegations from the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the chairmanship of Mr. Hans Blix and Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei. Both delegations agreed on arrangements for the return of the weapons inspectors and chose 19 October 2002 as the date when the first UNMOVIC team would reach Baghdad.

The Iraqi delegation, in the course of that meeting submitted the semi-annual reports concerning the sites that are subject to monitoring, and that had not been monitored since the inspectors left Iraq four years ago. These reports show Iraq fully respects its obligations pursuant to Security Council resolution 687 (1991), despite the absence of the monitoring and inspection teams. Bear in mind that these developments clearly reflect the wishes of Iraq and the United Nations and their readiness to begin confidence-building measures and pave the way for the Security Council to implement its own obligations.

In spite of these developments the United States of America has tried to hamper such agreements by increasing its threats against Iraq, appearing before the Security Council in order to obtain the blank check needed to carry out its aggression and by calling for the imposition of unfair, impossible and arbitrary conditions on Iraq. These conditions are, at the least, an insult to the international community, the United Nations and international law and constitute a return to the law of the jungle.

The war hysteria that seems to have hit the current American Government is fed by hatred and by a desire to settle old accounts and impose its hegemony on the world politically, militarily, and economically. The United States is not interested in the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, for the United States of America is the main ally of Israel, which has refused to implement more than twenty-eight Security Council resolutions and scores of General Assembly resolutions that have called on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories and to allow Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. The United States of America has been providing Israel with state-of-the-art weapons to kill the heroic Palestinian people and destroy their property.

This aggressive American hysteria has nothing to do with ending the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the world, for the United States of America possesses the largest arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and has a longer history of using these weapons against people, starting with Hiroshima and Nagasaki, then Viet Nam and most recently by using depleted uranium against Iraq and Yugoslavia. The United States is the country that revoked the Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty. It unilaterally hampered the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) which calls for making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

Allow me to mention, as an example, a statement of the former Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. José Bustani, published in Le Monde Diplomatique in July of this year, where he stated:

> "From the very beginning we were faced with difficulty when the Americans refused to allow the members of the organization to carry out their inspections. Very often the inspectors could not enter the laboratories so we remained unable to ascertain that they were actually producing chemical material for peaceful purposes only. It was very difficult for us to examine the samples, for it was not possible to carry out such an inspection, except in the American laboratories. In the final analysis, we had no guarantee as to the validity of the results. At every inspection operation the Americans were trying to change the rules of the game."

We call on the international community loudly to voice their objections to the aggressive designs of the United States of America against Iraq, in order to prevent it from using the Security Council as a tool to carry out its policy of aggression. Not to speak out in the face of these attempts would have serious repercussions on international peace and security, for this would be the beginning of the end of the collective security system as set out in the Charter of the United Nations and of all other instruments, agreements and conventions governing international relations. The key principles underpinning all of these include resorting first to peaceful means in the settlement of conflicts, refraining from the use of force, or the threat thereof, and from violating the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, respecting equal

sovereignty among States Members of the United Nations; and following a policy of non-intervention in matters that fall under the jurisdiction of a given State. This hegemonistic attitude will claim many victims if we do not bridle it.

Today we must urgently reject Washington's attempts to hinder the return of the inspectors. It is doing so even though Iraq has taken all the necessary practical measures and arrangements and paved the way for the return of the inspectors and made the necessary preparations for them to carry out their work easily.

Iraq has pledged to cooperate with the inspectors in every possible way so as to facilitate their task of ascertaining that there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

There is therefore absolutely no need for the adoption a new Security Council resolution. The attempts being made by the United States of America to hamper and delay the return of the inspectors and to make the Security Council adopt a new resolution laying down conditions that are impossible to respect are but a pretext for aggression against Iraq. The goal of that aggression is the colonization of our country and the imposition of American domination over our oil, as a first step towards the imposition of American colonialism in the region as a whole and the control of its oil and towards allowing Israel to continue its genocidal war against the Palestinian people and its aggression against the Arab countries.

The United States of America does not want the inspectors to return, because if they do there will be proof that the Americans have consistently lied and made false allegations. At that point the Security Council would have to lift the unjust embargo against Iraq, ensure respect for its national and regional security concerns, and implement of the other requirements set out in Council resolutions; and that is exactly what the United States of America does not want.

Finally, we are confident that, now that Iraq has expressed its readiness before the Security Council unconditionally to receive the inspectors, the States Members of the United Nations will defend its decisions, just as all peoples have done in rejecting the American war of aggression.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Kuwait. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council during the current month. We are confident that your skills and experience will ensure a successful stewardship. We wish also to thank your predecessor, Stefan Tafrov of Bulgaria, for his able leadership of the Council last month.

The Security Council is debating today the current situation between Iraq and the United Nations against the sombre backdrop of ominous precursors of an imminent war in one of the most sensitive and strategic regions of the world, which would have a direct impact on the crucial lifelines of the world economy and subsequently on global stability.

The debate has taken on even greater significance in view of the complex and difficult situation of the international community as it endeavours to channel substantial energies and resources to the combat against terrorism and to identify its underlying causes, uproot it and resolve any problems that might be perceived as justifications or pretexts for the commission of such heinous crimes.

In the face of this common threat, the world must be united in its goals, in shouldering its responsibilities and in taking action. This should be done only within the framework of the United Nations system, because unilateral actions taken as a result of being in a position of power could prove, down the road, as ineffective as a reluctance to pitch in due to weakness. Truly effective and meaningful action should therefore be driven by a sense of our common destiny in the face of a threat that is blind to nationality, religion, race and culture.

This, perhaps, explains the overwhelming international support for the statement made by the Secretary-General when on 12 September last he introduced his annual report on the work of the Organization at the beginning of the General Assembly's general debate. In that introduction, he stressed the need to strengthen collective action to ensure respect for international law and to abide by the legality of the United Nations in confronting any threat to international peace and security.

The President of the United States of America, speaking on the same day and from the same rostrum, stated that the United Nations should take on that obligation. That position can be considered as an endorsement of joint international action within the framework of the United Nations, which must characterize any approach to issues relating to international peace and security.

Kuwait feels very strongly that any action taken must be taken within the United Nations legal framework. Without such a framework, Kuwait would probably not have been liberated from Iraqi occupation early in 1991. Furthermore, the issues that emerged as a result of that occupation, and which are still unresolved with regard to Iraq, would not have assumed such great international significance.

In this respect, my delegation supports the convening of this open debate in the Security Council. Indeed, we consider it as further evidence that the current situation with regard to Iraq must be resolved between Iraq and the United Nations, not between Iraq and any particular country or group of countries.

Over the past few months the Security Council has been involved in intensive efforts to find a peaceful solution to the current crisis, which arose as a result of the rejection by Iraq of resolution 1284 (1999) by blocking the return of United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq. That position prompted the international community to insist that the United Nations continue to play its essential role and that the Security Council's credibility be reaffirmed through the implementation of its relevant resolutions, as required by the Charter.

Kuwait hopes that the current international momentum can be maintained so as to ensure that Iraq fully implements all relevant resolutions. The unity of the Security Council is essential; without it, the message from the Council will not reach Iraq with full force and the Council will not achieve its true objective — full compliance with the relevant resolutions. Only such compliance will ensure peace and security throughout the region and allow the dark clouds of war that are looming on the horizon to dissipate.

I would like to sum up the position of the State of Kuwait regarding the current situation. First, we welcome the steps taken by the Iraqi Government to readmit United Nations weapons inspectors without restrictions or conditions. My Government considers that to be a move in the right direction.

Second, we consider that full compliance by the Government of Iraq with all the operational procedures, rules, controls and requirements set out by the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission to ensure an effective and fruitful inspection process within the time frame that has been set out to be the only yardstick for evaluating Iraq's seriousness and credibility with regard to the unconditional and unfettered readmission of the inspectors.

Third, ever since the early clouds of war began to gather as a result of Iraq's persistent rejection of the return of inspectors, Kuwait has declared that it was not in favour of the use of military force against Iraq because we feared serious negative consequences that would exacerbate the suffering and hardship of the brotherly people of Iraq, who have already endured so much.

We in Kuwait are very sensitive to the suffering of the Iraqi people. That is why we have called on the Government of Iraq time and again to save the people of Iraq from their grave situation by fully implementing all relevant Security Council resolutions without selectivity or procrastination, and by putting the welfare of the people ahead of all other narrow interests.

Fourth, force must be used only as a last resort after all other available means have been exhausted, and must be within the United Nations legal framework. The Kuwaiti position is completely in line with those of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Summit that took place at Beirut last March and the ministerial meeting of the League of Arab States, held at Cairo last September. All of those forums rejected the use of military force outside the United Nations framework against any Arab State, especially Iraq, as well as any measures that might jeopardize Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Fifth, Kuwait maintains that the Secretary-General's 1998 concept of diplomacy backed by force aimed at ensuring the necessary compliance with Security Council resolutions has been shown to be valid once again in the context of seeking a peaceful solution to the Iraqi question.

Ongoing efforts to ensure compliance by Iraq with the provisions of relevant Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq should not be confined to the question of the return of inspectors to Iraq and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Despite the paramount importance of that matter, it is still only one of the major obligations that Iraq must fulfil. Iraq has other key obligations, including some that relate directly to my country, Kuwait, most importantly the question of Kuwaiti prisoners of war and third country nationals held in Iraq. Those obligations are set forth in Security Council resolutions 686 (1991), 687 (1991) and 1284 (1999), all of which require Iraq to cooperate fully with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in order to ensure a speedy resolution of the matter.

Regrettably, since 1998 the Iraqi Government has been boycotting the meetings of the Tripartite Commission, chaired by the ICRC and charged with accounting for those innocent victims. All of the worthy efforts of the Secretary-General and his High-Level Coordinator on this issue, Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov, as well as the repeated calls made by the Council after every four-month periodic review of the Coordinator's reports, have thus far been in vain.

Here, I would like to emphasize that no one else can comprehend the intransigence of the Iraqi position regarding this purely humanitarian issue, which should not have been allowed to drag on for the past 12 years.

The Government of Iraq has been attempting to justify its non-participation in the Tripartite Commission, despite the fact that Iraq was one of the States signatories to the Riyadh Agreement of 1991, and despite the fact that such participation was set forth as a specific obligation in section B of resolution 1284 (1999). Iraq's argument for refusing to sit down with the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom is that those two countries launched military attacks against it in 1998 and that there are no dossiers on any nationals from those two States.

Following Iraq's acceptance of the unconditional and unrestricted return of inspectors, my delegation wonders how Iraq can seek to bar individuals of any nationality from participating in the inspection teams. Would the Council permit such exclusions? I am confident that the Council will not condone such a position. Also, I am sure that the Government of Iraq will not make such a request. Following that line of reasoning, how could the Government of Iraq refuse to cooperate with the Tripartite Commission because of the involvement of nationals from certain States, while allowing those same States to participate in the inspection operations?

Regarding the argument that there are no dossiers on nationals from either the United Kingdom or the United States, I wonder how Iraq can accept inspectors of all nationalities, individuals who have the required technical qualifications and experience in the area of weapons of mass destruction, while the same criteria of technical qualifications and knowledge of the military operations to liberate Kuwait are not applied in the case of the missing persons issue. Both United States and United Kingdom forces were major parties in the war to liberate Kuwait. Therefore, those two countries are quite familiar with all the events during that difficult period. In fact, that is all the more reason why those two countries should participate in the meetings of the Tripartite Commission.

We demand that Iraq respond with regard to this issue in order to resolve it once and for all. We expect Iraq to give concrete demonstration of the good intentions it expressed at the Beirut Arab Summit when it pledged to find a quick and definitive solution to the question of Kuwaiti and third country prisoners and hostages. To that end, we are awaiting Iraq's participation in the coming meetings of the Tripartite Commission on 24 October in Geneva under the chairmanship of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Iraq must abandon its worn-out pretexts and justifications, which are totally unacceptable in form and content.

The question of Kuwaiti and third country detainees in Iraq is not a bilateral issue between Kuwait and Iraq. Nor is the issue suited to be considered by a regional organization, as the Government of Iraq currently seeks to have done. Rather it is an issue of international commitment, as stressed in a number of Security Council resolutions. The Council has been seized of this matter from the very beginning and has been holding consultations on the issue once every four months. Kuwait takes this opportunity to call on the international community and the Council to maintain pressure on Iraq to persuade it that its cooperation in resolving this issue should arise from explicit political will and not from a sense of fear that will dissipate as soon as threats of the use of force are dropped.

I request that the Council ensure that the question of Kuwaiti and third country prisoners held in Iraq be a key element in any Council resolution adopted on the current situation between Iraq and the United Nations. Indeed, this is the most propitious time to break the deadlock on this humanitarian question. The Security Council and the United Nations system cannot be true to themselves unless they honour their commitments, demonstrate respect for human rights and address human suffering effectively. In that context, we expect the Council to give as much attention to the suffering endured by the people of Kuwait since 1990 as it devotes to saving the region from the evils and horrors of weapons of mass destruction. For, in the end, all efforts of the United Nations system, and the Council in particular, aim at protecting human life, human dignity, families and communities. That function constitutes the first step towards global security and stability.

In closing, let me reiterate Kuwait's clear position. We invite the Government of Iraq to heed the appeals of the international community and all nations in our area, especially those in the Gulf region, and to make every possible effort in a spirit of sincerity to comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, Iraq should strictly abide by the will of the international community, represented by the Council, in order to avoid a war and its consequences and the additional suffering that it will cause the brotherly people of Iraq. Such a war will certainly affect all citizens of the region, who aspire to live in peace and tranquillity and to devote all their energy towards meeting economic, social and cultural challenges.

All of us should live up to our responsibilities and acquire wisdom and far-sightedness. God entrusted us with the present and all its potential in order to build the future with all its requirements. Without peace, we shall not be able to use the present for our own sake, nor can we ensure the future for our children.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Kuwait for his kind words addressed to me. The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Yemen. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Alsaidi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we would like to thank the delegation of South Africa for requesting an open meeting of the Council on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. It is not without significance that this meeting is convened following a request from the current chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, which encompasses the majority of the world's nations in an association whose only purpose is its declared aspiration to achieve security and well-being for all peoples of the world.

It is not an overstatement to say that peoples' eyes are fixed on this Chamber in the hope that signals of peace will be heard rather than omens of war and destruction. Above all, it is the Arab peoples who continue to yearn for an end to external interventions that persist in the shadow of the long tragedy of the Palestinian people. It seems that this issue has not merited the attention of the members of this Council, despite the scenes of Israeli terrorism and the trail of destruction and killing left in its wake, as projected by the mass media before the eyes of the international community and people all over the world.

In spite of the numerous of areas of conflict and the gravity of situations in many areas of the world today, the Security Council has put the question of its relationship with Iraq as a top priority, ahead of all others. Certainly, no one can deny the great importance the Council attaches to this issue. It primarily affects security and stability in our region and relations among its member States.

However, confining discussion to the parameters of military intervention merely to seek justification for the intervention, while at the same time ruling out all other options that could ensure Iraq's compliance with Security Council resolutions, completely contravenes the sense of responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This will remain a bone of contention and will not achieve unanimity, or even consensus, which constitutes the sole basis for initiating military action on behalf of the international community.

We have seen how Iraq responded to Arab and international political pressures. We have heard Iraq's recent announcement that it would re-admit the United Nations weapons inspectors so they could resume their mission without restrictions or conditions. In fact, Iraq went further in allowing inspectors to have access to presidential palaces for this purpose. This in itself is proof of the positive impact of such pressure. If efforts are coordinated and guided well by this Council, they

will bear fruit and save the region and the world from war, the consequences of which only God knows.

For our part, the question is quite clear and needs no complications. Many peaceful ways and means could be found to compel the Iraqi Government to positive cooperation by implementing Security Council resolutions if some countries abandoned the logic of force and did not restrict their thinking to war as the only option. It is only rational that the Council should adopt the views of wise people and historical experience. Foremost among such wise people are Presidents Nelson Mandela and Jimmy Carter, who called for renouncing the option of war and for giving peace a chance.

Like many others, we do not concur with those who call for the use of a pre-emptive strike as the only way for eliminating Iraq's ability to produce weapons of mass destruction and to launch aggressive acts against others in the future. Launching war against others solely on the basis of reading their intentions would open the door wide to explode hotbeds of tension and wars whose roots had been lying dormant. Undoubtedly, in many cases resorting to force illustrates a shortcoming more than it provides evidence of the sensibility and rationality of the decision to use force. Military intervention by coalition States against Iraq was justified in 1991, but the measures taken over a 10-year period after that to implement relevant Security Council resolutions, including the sanctions system, resulted only in humanitarian tragedy suffered by the Iraqi people, tragedies that multiply day after day. The current calls for military action present another admission of the failure of those measures and a consideration of the same error.

The Republic of Yemen, which rejects any military action against Iraq, believes that it is not wise for the Council to adopt new resolutions that would complicate the issue and would not contribute in any way to the achievement of a satisfactory solution.

The Republic of Yemen feels that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait represented a threat to regional and international peace and security, but at the end of that invasion Iraq pledged to respect the sovereignty and independence of the State of Kuwait and gave its commitment to implement all relevant Security Council resolutions. In our view, this does not provide any justification for any new military action against Iraq. The Republic of Yemen expresses its grave concern over the current approach to invade Iraq, with all the military mobilization and political alliances that are being shaped in earnest. This constitutes a direct threat to the security and stability of our region.

Yemen adheres to the collective Arab position that rejects any invasion of Iraq and urges instead all parties to demonstrate positive cooperation and to give the United Nations weapons inspectors a chance to fulfil their task, without any attempt to affect the completion of their mission — that is, ensuring the full and simultaneous implementation of all requirements of relevant Security Council resolutions.

Yemen hopes that the reconciliation that took place at the recent Arab Summit in Beirut will lead to implementation of the Summit's resolutions which regard the resolution of the question of Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees as being primarily a humanitarian issue, in addition to being an essential step that would contribute to confidence-building and that would be a demonstration of good faith towards the restoration of normal and brotherly relations between the brothers in Kuwait and Iraq.

An Arab proverb says: the people of Mecca know their ravines better than anybody else. We would say that the States of the region, which are threatened by the expansionist ambitions of Israel, share the view that the Israeli arsenal of weapons of mass destruction represents the real and direct threat to Arab security, especially under the constant threats made by successive Israeli Governments.

We wonder how anyone could be convinced that the right approach is to intervene militarily in Iraq in order to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction, given that Iraq has asserted that it has no such weapons and has, in fact, welcomed the return of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission. That approach is even more questionable when one considers that Israel is continuing to produce and stockpile weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, without any deterrent action or accountability.

We trust in the wisdom and sense of responsibility of the Council. We also wish to highlight the historical importance of Security Council resolutions on this subject in the light of the long-term implications for security and stability in the region, so

particular, and for the future of international relations, in general.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to express my pleasure and confidence at seeing you, Mr. President, presiding over the work of the Council at this very delicate moment in international relations. I know that your experience, abilities and fine human qualities will be severely tested during the next two weeks. I am convinced, however, that the Council will make the best use of your capabilities in order to carry its work in the interests of peace, security and justice throughout the world. I would also like to pay well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Stefan Tafrov of Bulgaria, who very competently presided over the Council's work last month. Lastly, I would like to convey my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the clear message delivered by Ms. Fréchette on his behalf. I would also like to express my support for the approach he has suggested and for the role he would like to see the Security Council play in resolving the issue under consideration.

Before commenting on the subject of our meeting today, I would like, on behalf of the Government of Algeria, to express my profound grief to those in Indonesia and elsewhere who have been cruelly struck in body and soul by the cowardly and horrific terrorist attack in Bali. I convey to them my condolences and my sympathy. This attack has brutally reminded us that terrorism is indeed a global challenge and that it must be confronted collectively and in solidarity. Terrorism is a very real and formidable threat that can materialize at any time. No one is totally immune from it, and no one can act alone to combat it. The war against terrorism is a fight on all fronts that requires continuous and unfailing vigilance and mobilization. Today more than ever before, the United Nations must continue to devote all its attention and energy to it.

Like the rest of the international community, Algeria has followed with great concern the developments of the last few months regarding Iraq. We can therefore only be concerned at the grave dangers that a new conflict in Iraq would pose to regional and international peace and security.

Iraq demonstrated realism, wisdom and a sense of responsibility when, on 16 September, it accepted the unconditional return of United Nations inspectors to its territory. The same holds true for the agreement it reached with the Organization at Vienna in early October concerning the conditions for the return, work and stay of the inspectors. All of us were therefore pleased with this important development, which appeared to make it possible to close the book on the subject of weapons of mass destruction once and for all. The total elimination of those weapons is what the Security Council has been calling for.

We also thought that these developments would have made it possible for us to avoid the spectre of war. We had hoped that these decisions by Iraq, which have been the culmination of friendly and timely efforts by a number of peace-loving and justice-loving countries — particularly Arab countries — as well as by countries committed to the incontrovertible role of the United Nations in the settlement of international disputes, would have led to the prompt return of inspectors, a speedy resumption of inspections and, within a reasonable time frame, the much-hoped-for lifting of sanctions, which have taken a heavy toll on the people of Iraq. We had also hoped that that they would have helped to bring about peace and security in Iraq, in strict compliance with its sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

Despite those positive developments, the threat of armed conflict nevertheless continues to weigh on the region. That threat is also causing major fears about the very grave consequences that such a conflict would have in Iraq itself, as well as in other countries of the region. Those fears are especially legitimate and justified given the fact that, in that same part of the world, Israel, intoxicated with its military might and, unfortunately, guaranteed impunity, is launching an all-out war against the Palestinian civilian population and on the infrastructure and symbols of the Palestinian Authority. Israel is continuing to occupy and colonize Palestinian and Arab territories, to threaten to bring down its wrath upon neighbouring countries and to violate the most basic rules of international humanitarian law.

In addition to its catastrophic impact on the people of Iraq — who for over 10 years have been subjected to largely inhumane sanctions — and the impact it would have on the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, a military operation

against Iraq — let there be no doubt — would also have very grave consequences on the peace process in the Middle East, which is already moribund, as well as on the Israeli-Arab conflict itself. This already battered region of the world could well experience paroxysms of unpredictable gravity and magnitude.

In this connection, the international community expects that the Council, if it wishes to maintain its authority and credibility — which have been severely tested by repeated Israeli intransigence — will first assume all of its responsibilities vis-à-vis the Palestinian people and demonstrate its determination and firmness with regard to all those who reject and show contempt for its resolutions. Contempt is unfortunately exactly what Israel had shown when the Council adopted resolution 1435 (2002), regarding the situation in the occupied territories. The Security Council must, in short, be consistent and fair. It should meticulously ensure compliance with its resolutions in every instance.

With regard to the specific question of Iraq, Algeria holds out the hope that the issue of weapons of mass destruction will be resolved in a responsible and peaceful way and in accordance with the principles of international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The earliest possible return of inspectors and the resumption of the inspections mission seem to us to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the Council and of the international community with regard to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and, we hope, in every country of this very volatile part of the world.

Iraq has made a clear and unambiguous commitment to cooperate fully with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the international community should give them a chance to do so. At the same time, we would expect that Iraq would scrupulously respect its commitments and all of its obligations. If it turns out that UNMOVIC inspectors have been prevented from doing their job and if their chief or the Executive Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency can establish that in a sure and irrefutable way and so notify the Security Council, only then should the Council decide on a position to adopt in the face of such a situation.

It is Algeria's hope that the Security Council — which has a daunting mandate of watching over the preservation of international peace and security and which is thus the central pillar of the collective security system established at the end of the second world war and therefore the only body authorized to decide on recourse to force — will be able to assume its responsibilities in keeping with the provisions of the Charter and international legality, so that Iraq and the entire Middle East will be spared the scourge of war.

At the Beirut Summit, which cemented reconciliation between Kuwait and Iraq, we called on the parties to work to resolve their outstanding disputes. And during the last session of the Council of Ministers of the League of Arab States, the Arab States said that they were firmly opposed to any military operation against any Arab State. It is therefore our most fervent hope that this position will be duly taken into account during the Council's deliberations and that for a logic of war which is developing today we substitute a momentum for peace in the obvious interest of all people of the Middle East, and for peace and security in the region and throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Algeria for his kind words.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today, as we meet to consider the situation in Iraq, it is imperative to recognize that the issue before us concerns not only the future of Iraq, its territorial integrity and independence, or even the dire humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people, but also the direct implications of the issue on the entire Middle East.

Our meeting today has set out to consider the Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq and to determine how much progress has been made in their implementation. There is no doubt in our mind that significant progress has been achieved in implementing the disarmament provisions of these resolutions during eight years of inspections, something to which the periodic reports produced by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Special Commission until mid-1998 bear witness.

After a hiatus of approximately four years in the arms inspections, Iraq took the initiative of resuming dialogue with the Secretary-General with a view to

resolving the outstanding issues that stood in the way of resumption of inspections and to completing the remaining tasks. Iraq also accepted Security Council resolution 1284 (1999) and the idea of cooperating with United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). We all followed closely the outcome of the trilateral discussions conducted in Vienna between Iraq, UNMOVIC and the IAEA that resolvedly indicated a maximum degree of cooperation with regard to the return of inspectors. This commitment to full cooperation was affirmed in the correspondence between Iraq and the Secretary-General, as well as with the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC.

The situation therefore indicates a positive momentum based on the mutual goodwill of the parties towards implementing Security Council resolutions relating to proscribed Iraqi military activities and the speedy return of inspectors to Iraq. This is the focus and objective of Security Council concern, and attention should be directed towards the prompt resumption of inspections in Iraq pursuant to relevant Council resolutions in order to complete the mandate established by those resolutions, particularly resolution 687 (1991) and 1284 (1999). It is our hope therefore that all parties concerned will cooperate in order to ensure meticulous, rapid and unimpeded implementation of these tasks.

While Egypt urges Iraq to work seriously towards full implementation of all Security Council resolutions, we also stress the need for the utmost integrity and professionalism in future inspection activities of UNMOVIC, with adherence to the letter and spirit of all the resolutions. It is therefore essential that UNMOVIC move rapidly towards fulfilling the tasks entrusted to it in an atmosphere of calm and constructive cooperation in order to ensure the destruction of prohibited weapons of mass destruction, if their existence is ascertained.

In this context, the Security Council must remain fully aware that the efforts to destroy this proscribed Iraqi potential, if it exists, are a step towards a broader objective, namely the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, as outlined in paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991) and reaffirmed in resolution 1284 (1999). These efforts need to be undertaken within the framework of a comprehensive approach to the question of Iraq by the Security Council as provided for in resolution 1284 (1999) and the terms of reference in that resolution. The aim would be to achieve progress towards lifting the sanctions imposed on Iraq while ensuring full respect for its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

In this regard, I also wish to recall the statement issued by the Arab Summit held in Beirut seven months ago and Iraq's commitments to fulfil it obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions concerning Kuwaiti prisoners of war and missing persons, or those of third countries, and the return of Kuwaiti property. We accordingly encourage Iraq to cooperate with the United Nations High-level Coordinator responsible for this issue and urge the Iraqi Government to implement scrupulously its obligations in order to assist in settling this issue with the same speed that we hope to see in progress on disarmament and the lifting of sanctions. At the same time, we expect all parties to fulfil their obligations, thereby enhancing international legitimacy and permitting the Security Council to fulfil its unique role in accordance with the Charter.

The Security Council's mandate to preserve international peace and security on behalf of all members of the international community is a responsibility that must be fulfilled with the utmost credibility and without discrimination or double standards. We trust that the members of the Security Council will discharge their responsibility in a sincere and objective manner, bearing in mind that the convening of this formal session to consider an issue that is of the utmost gravity and sensitivity is in itself an important step towards averting an armed confrontation whose many casualties will be innocent civilians and that will undermine development and reconstruction efforts.

In conclusion, Egypt affirms the importance of Iraq's full and strict implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions in order to steer us away from the path of military confrontation. We also stress and draw attention to the common responsibility that we all bear as Members of the United Nations, an Organization that was established to preserve peace and security for the mutual benefit and preservation of all rights of all members of the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The issue before us today is not unfamiliar to the Security Council; it has indeed been a hardy perennial of its agenda for two decades. The Security Council has adopted several resolutions under the agenda item "Situation between Iraq and Kuwait". These resolutions include 686 (1991), calling on Iraq to accept liability under international law in regard to Kuwaiti and third country nationals and to return all Kuwaiti property; 687 (1991), deciding that Iraq shall not acquire nuclear weapons and that it shall unconditionally accept the destruction and removal of all chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles of more than 150 kilometres in range; and 1284 (1999), deciding to send the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) to Iraq for weapons inspection.

Article 25 of the United Nations Charter states:

> "The Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter".

This Article imposes a clear-cut obligation on Member States to implement the decisions of the Security Council without conditions. The implementation of Security Council resolutions is essential to upholding the credibility of the United Nations. We urge Iraq to cooperate with the Security Council and with the concerned countries and international agencies and to implement these Security Council resolutions in conformity with Article 25.

Security Council resolutions should be implemented through measures and modalities which are consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and international law. These measures include the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter providing for mediation, conciliation, arbitration and other methods for agreed and cooperative implementation. We commend the Secretary-General and involved agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations oil-for-food programme, for their tireless and sincere efforts to secure the implementation of the Security Council resolutions relevant to their respective mandates.

Most of the resolutions relating to Iraq have been adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter and therefore contain the implicit and even explicit implication that enforcement action could be taken by the United Nations, as envisaged in Article 42 of the Charter, to secure compliance with its resolutions. Clearly, such enforcement action has been an option, in particular with regard to securing compliance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991) dealing with Iraqi disarmament of weapons of mass destruction. However, enforcement action involving the collective use of force has been and must remain an option of last resort, not the first policy choice. We therefore greatly admired the intervention of Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1998 to personally negotiate arrangements with Iraq which averted the use of force. It is unfortunate that these were not fully implemented.

Notwithstanding the precedents of the past, any decision involving the use of collective force to secure implementation of Security Council decisions has such grave and serious implications that there must remain no doubt in anyone's mind that it has been clearly and expressly authorized by the Security Council. Article 42 does not provide the authority to one or more Member States to resort to force unilaterally and on their own judgement, independently of the Security Council or without its explicit approval.

A grave responsibility, therefore, rests on the Security Council today, when it has been challenged to secure the enforcement of its own resolutions relating to Iraq. In taking these decisions, Pakistan trusts that all the members of the Security Council will remain cognizant of their responsibility, in particular, to adhere strictly to the principles and relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

A first responsibility is to ensure that all possibilities for the peaceful resolution of the problem have been visibly exhausted. In this context, due note should be taken of Iraq's declaration that it will comply with its obligations under the Security Council resolutions; of its Foreign Minister's letter of 16 September accepting weapons inspections "without conditions"; of the arrangements with UNMOVIC and IAEA worked out in Vienna as outlined in Mr. Blix's letter of 8 October to his Iraqi interlocutor; and of the two letters of 10 and 12 October from the Iraqi side confirming the acceptance of these arrangements. We trust that these arrangements and understandings will be observed and implemented in letter and spirit.

Pakistan, like most Members of the United Nations, supports the full and faithful implementation of the Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq. At the same time, we are concerned that international and regional peace and security be preserved and strengthened, and not destabilized. We are especially concerned about the implications for peace, security and stability in the Middle East and in the Islamic world.

We are concerned that Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity be respected and preserved; that the suffering of the people of Iraq be ameliorated and not exacerbated, including through the early lifting of United Nations sanctions.

We are concerned that those States which are occupying of foreign territories and suppressing the right of peoples to self-determination not be further encouraged in their aggressive policies, such as in the case of Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, and India's occupation of Jammu and Kashmir.

We are concerned that the global economy and the economies of the States of the region not be damaged.

We believe that these concerns are shared by all the members of the Security Council. Therefore, confident that the decisions they will adopt will not only adhere to the principles of the Charter and international law but also be responsive to the wider concerns of the world community as reflected in the voices of common people everywhere appealing for a peaceful resolution of the problems relating to the implementation of these Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq.

Pakistan is confident that the United Nations will succeed in responding to the challenge to establish its relevance and credibility. It is essential, however, that the credibility of the United Nations be established not only in the case of Iraq but also in other instances Security Council resolutions remain to be implemented or are being flouted, such as in Jammu and Kashmir.

We live in new times today, when globalization is pressing together nations and peoples who remain divided by asymmetric prosperity and asymmetric power. In these conditions, global order can be preserved only if the great Powers possess the wisdom to respect international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. If great Powers respect international law, even if they feel they need not, smaller States will realize that they must do so.

Almost a hundred years ago, Joseph Chamberlain is reported to have said: "The day of small nations has long passed. The day of empires has come." With 191 sovereign States now Members of this United Nations, no one should be seduced by similar prognostications today. The alternative to an international order based on law and equity is a Hobbesian world of chaos and conflict, war and terror, poverty and pestilence, which surely no one is prepared to contemplate.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and make his statement.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset and on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the Council for this month, wishing you every success in leading its activities. I would also like to seize this opportunity to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria, for his valuable efforts, which certainly contributed to the success of the work of the Council last month.

The holding of this open formal session on the question of Iraq reflects the growing concern of the international community in view of developments related to this important and sensitive issue that unfortunately has not found an appropriate solution in the past 12 years.

As for the relation between Iraq and the Security Council, it has become obvious today, more than ever before, that the gap separating the two sides is increasing, particularly with regard to the interpretation of the articles of resolutions relevant to disarmament of weapons of mass destruction and their implementation. Of course, this increases the tension and affects the political and security situation in the region and deeply affects the economic, social and development conditions of the countries and peoples of the region, as well as international peace and security as a whole.

As far as the humanitarian condition of the Iraqi people is concerned, the periodic reports issued by the Secretary-General and other international humanitarian organizations, such as UNICEF, FAO and WHO, and

other human rights organizations clearly indicate that the living conditions of the Iraqi people are deteriorating constantly, particularly the increase in the mortality rates among children and women because of malnutrition and deteriorating medical care. All this goes to prove that the oil-for-food programme has not been adequate in fulfilling the basic and urgent human needs of the Iraqi people.

Moreover, this also reflects the fact that stalled efforts to reach a settlement between Iraq and Kuwait constitute one of the main reasons for the continuing tension in the region.

The United Arab Emirates has, on all occasions, encouraged the adoption of peaceful means and ways to address this issue and is thus profoundly concerned about the danger of escalation leading to war in the region. We believe that more than ever before it is incumbent upon the international community, particularly the United Nations, to assume their legal and political responsibilities and to promote the preventive diplomacy which the Secretary-General has more than once called for in order to avoid a third war in the region, with its nefarious consequences.

We would like to reiterate that we welcome the recent initiative of Iraq calling for the UNMOVIC inspectors and the IAEA experts to visit Iraq unconditionally. We also welcome the recent Vienna agreement on the arrangements for immediate resumption of the mandate of the inspectors. We call upon the Security Council and the influential members therein to urgently and unconditionally respond to this positive Iraqi initiative bearing in mind Iraq's concerns about the repetition of mistakes which were committed by UNSCOM in the past. This is, in fact, a first step towards Iraq's full commitment to comply with its legal obligations in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. In this context we would like to emphasize the following important issues: first, the urgent need to reach a peaceful, just, comprehensive and final settlement of all pending issues relating to the agenda item concerning the situation between Kuwait and Iraq, a settlement based upon the principle of transparency without a double standard in order to maintain the prestige and credibility of the Security Council in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the provisions of international law.

Secondly, we would like to insure implementation of all provisions of Security Council resolutions calling for respect for the sovereignty of Iraq, its territorial integrity and non-interference in its internal affairs. We also reject all forms of escalation and confrontation that might lead to a military strike against Iraq and cause destruction of the people of Iraq and the Gulf, as well as the entire region.

Thirdly, we demand that the Iraqi Government immediately implement its obligations and commitments as stipulated in Security Council resolutions and by Arab League summit meetings, of which the latest, the Beirut Summit, called for full cooperation in order to solve the problem of Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees and nationals of third countries, and the restoration of Kuwaiti property detained by Iraq since 1990. In this context, we also affirm the importance of Iraq's respect for the territorial sovereignty of Kuwait and non-interference in its internal affairs.

Fourthly, we call for a positive response to efforts calling for the immediate lifting of the international sanctions imposed on the people of Iraq in order to alleviate the tremendous suffering of the Iraqi people that has resulted in the death of 1.7 million of its people. We also call for assistance for Iraq to reconstruct its infrastructure and its basic service sectors.

Fifthly, we must ensure that paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) apply to all countries of the region and not to be limited only to Iraq. This requires that the international community call on the Government of Israel, just as it is calling on Iraq to destroy its arsenal of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and to subject all its nuclear facilities to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a first step towards establishing a zone free of all types of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

In conclusion, we hope that this debate on the question of Iraq will lead to a positive and effective consensus, an agreement to find a just, comprehensive and objective solution to this issue, which, in our opinion, will definitely contribute to containing the existing tension in the region and will assist in strengthening international peace and security and enhancing confidence-building and cooperation among the countries of the region.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset allow me to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and wish you all success in fulfilling the task entrusted to you. I would also like to thank the previous president, the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria, His Excellency Ambassador Stefan Tafrov for the efforts he made during his presidency of the Council.

At the end of World War II, our Organization was established in an endeavour to save future generations from the scourge of war through the maintenance of justice, respect for international law and the promotion of basic human rights. The United Nations took it upon itself to maintain international peace and security by resorting to collective measures to prevent and remove threats to peace and to bring about, by peaceful means when possible and in accordance with the principles of justice and international law, the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

Those purposes and guidelines are relevant to the current situation, which threatens the exhaustion of peaceful means in dealing with the Iraqi issue. As such, the Jordanian Government is of the opinion that all Member States of the United Nations should work towards achieving a solution through peaceful means and should avoid acts that would breach that peace and make the situation in the Middle East even more critical. This alone compels the Security Council to assume its responsibilities as provided for in the United Nations Charter, including paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 24. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the Security Council to use all available and reasonable means to resolve the Iraqi issue and settle it through continuous dialogue and negotiations.

In this connection, the Jordanian Government would like to reiterate its position that the implementation of Security Council resolutions is an obligation on all States, without exception, including the Security Council's resolutions on the Middle East, whether they were adopted with regard to Iraq or to the occupied Palestinian territories.

It is the opinion of the Jordanian Government that a peaceful exit out of the current crisis requires Iraq to fully implement relevant Security Council resolutions, including those related to inspection operations. In this regard, the Jordanian Government again welcomes the decision of Iraq to allow the inspectors to return without conditions, as mentioned in the letter from the Foreign Minister of Iraq to the United Nations Secretary-General dated 16 September 2002.

It further welcomes the understandings reached earlier this month in Vienna on practical arrangements for the return of inspectors. The Jordanian Government hopes that the resumption of inspection operations will be the right step towards a comprehensive solution that encompasses the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including those relating to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti prisoners of war and missing persons and those of third countries.

This in turn must lead to an end to the long-lasting suffering of the Iraqi people, so that they can live in prosperity and dignity and so that Iraq's future generations can live in peace and security.

Finally, the Jordanian Government hopes that the Security Council will deal with the Iraqi question in a prudent and responsible manner that respects the purposes and principles of the Charter. It further appeals to all States to abide by their obligations and to act within the framework of the Security Council, its relevant resolutions and international law.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Jordan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Mr. President, let me express my thanks to you very much for convening today's open meeting.

The general debate of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly last month proved to be a notable opportunity to renew international momentum to address the issue of Iraq. In their statements, many leaders said that they saw the Government of Iraq's non-compliance with Security Council resolutions as a matter of grave concern to the entire world. They emphasized the importance of maintaining the unity of the international community and of resolving this issue through the United Nations.

In his statement before the General Assembly, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi stressed that Iraq must comply with all the relevant Security Council resolutions; that the international community should continue to work together and engage more strenuously in diplomatic efforts through the United Nations; and that it must pursue the adoption of necessary and appropriate Security Council resolutions as soon as possible.

In response to international appeals, including those made at the United Nations, the Government of Iraq announced that it would allow the return of United Nations weapons inspectors without conditions. Also, in their consultations in Vienna earlier this month, the Government of Iraq, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) basically agreed upon the practical arrangements for implementing the inspections based on the existing resolutions. These developments could be regarded as the first steps towards resolving the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. However, I have to emphasize that what is most important is that immediate, unconditional and unrestricted inspections actually be conducted in Iraq; that Iraq comply with all the relevant Security Council resolutions; and that there be no doubt whatsoever about the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on a number of points which the Government of Japan regards as important in the international community's efforts to address this issue.

First, in view of past experience regarding Iraq's acceptance of inspections, it is essential that the international community remain resolute and put maximum pressure on the Iraqi Government in order to make it comply with the resolutions.

Secondly, this should be considered not as an issue of Iraq versus certain countries, but as one facing the international community as a whole. Preserving international solidarity is thus key to resolving this issue.

Thirdly, the ability of the United Nations to act effectively has implications for the very credibility of this Organization and could have a decisive effect on international solidarity. Member States should therefore pursue ways to address this issue through the United Nations, and it is essential that the United Nations, in turn, function effectively.

Fourthly, any doubts regarding the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq should be completely dispelled, and to that end effective and credible inspections must be guaranteed. This is also important from the viewpoint of maintaining confidence in the international non-proliferation regime with regard to weapons of mass destruction. The Government of Japan supports the strengthening of the inspection regime necessary to ensure effective and credible inspections, including unfettered access to the presidential sites. We also support Mr. Hans Blix's steady and correct approach, and we will continue to cooperate with the activities of UNMOVIC under his leadership.

Last but not least, in dealing with this issue, it is indispensable to bear in mind the importance of paying serious attention to the interests and concerns of surrounding countries and of ensuring the stability of the region.

The attention of the international community with regard to this issue is now focused on the discussion of a new Security Council resolution. The Government of Japan hopes that the Security Council, which is entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will bear in mind the points I have just made, conduct its consultations seriously and expeditiously, and adopt a resolution that is both necessary and appropriate.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Japan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, allow me to convey to you our most sincere thanks for having acceded to the request of the Non-Aligned Movement that this open meeting of the Security Council be convened to consider the Iraq crisis. All signs had indicated that this issue was going to be resolved peacefully, in keeping with the norms of international law, relevant Council resolutions and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. But now we see that it has resurfaced in a way that threatens to plunge the world into crisis.

Indeed, the world is heading towards a serious crisis, and, if we are not careful, we shall be entering a period of terrible turmoil. Terrorism struck on 11 September 2001, and its evil deeds are spreading, as the recent carnage in Bali attests. The tragedy continues in Palestine, fighting goes on in Afghanistan, the world economy is in a dire state, and now there is talk of a new front — a fresh war in Iraq.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the entire world is mobilizing; that Member States are engaging in a debate in an open meeting of the Security Council; and that those present here should hear directly what millions of people — including some of our longstanding Anglo-American friends — are telling our Governments: that there should not be an attack on Iraq and that there should not be a war, because such a war would be pointless.

I say that it would be pointless because its motivation is not well-founded. Mr. Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor to the first President George Bush, wrote recently:

(*spoke in English*)

> "There is scant evidence to tie Iraq to terrorist organizations, and even less to the September 11 attacks".

(*spoke in French*)

That statement was often cited in the democratic debate in the United States Senate on 10 October, which we followed.

Such a war would be pointless because United Nations inspectors have been expected in Baghdad to carry out their tasks since 17 September, as Iraq has agreed to receive them immediately and unconditionally. A formal agreement to that effect was reached on 1 October in Vienna between the International Atomic Energy Agency and Hans Blix on the one hand, and an Iraqi delegation on the other.

Advocating an automatic recourse to force, thus prejudging the outcome of inspections, is unacceptable; we must not lose sight of the fact that it has not yet been established that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction. Rather than embarking on a spiral path that leads inexorably to confrontation and war, we should be facilitating the immediate return of the inspectors, whose job it is to dispel any doubts surrounding this issue by fully carrying out the mandate entrusted to them by all relevant Council resolutions.

Such a war would be pointless from the Arab standpoint. The Iraqi question — an Arab issue — has entered a new phase. In March 2002, following the active diplomacy of Crown Prince Abdullah, the Arab countries, inspired by wisdom and in a constructive peacemaking spirit, came together at the Beirut Summit to cement reconciliation among all the countries of the region. Iraq undertook to respect the independence, sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the State of Kuwait — those were the very words to come out of the summit — and to settle all humanitarian questions still outstanding between the two nations.

I remind the Council that the Beirut Summit unanimously and firmly opposed any attack against Iraq and took the view that any threat to the security and integrity of one Arab State was a threat to the national security of all Arab States". The Beirut Summit also demanded that the independence, sovereignty, security, national unity and territorial integrity of Iraq be respected and that the sanctions imposed on it be lifted in order to put an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people with a view to securing stability and security in the region.

In September, the idea of a war became even more pointless because the consensus was expanded, thanks to the goodwill, positive attitude and constructive approach of the Iraqi side. The Arab Group, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference welcomed Iraq's unconditional acceptance of the return of inspectors, thereby providing an opportunity for the problem to be resolved by diplomatic and peaceful means.

Such a war would also be harmful because it would trigger an avalanche of reactions and counter-reactions in Iraq and in the region as a whole. It would upset the balance in several ways. It would provide certain extremists with a pretext for expanding the war still further.

Such a war would be damaging because it would be likely to undermine the campaign against terrorism — a campaign that the international community has been painstakingly organizing, on the basis of a multilateral network, since the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001). Why risk creating the fracture in the alliance against terrorism that many experts have

predicted and perhaps jeopardizing the commitments that have been undertaken by those involved in that alliance?

Such a war would be an affront to the Arab world, which during the Beirut Summit rejected any attack directed against Iraq.

How then, should we handle this crisis? First of all, we must put an end to the war-mongering hysteria. To some extent, President Bush gave a sign of hope by stating that war was not inevitable. Other speakers have made the same point, including Senator John Warner, who stated that the resolution under consideration in Congress was not a blank cheque, but rather a deterrent.

We must therefore reconstruct multilateralism and place our trust in the good sense of the international community. In a striking book, Joseph S. Nye, Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, wrote:

(*spoke in English*)

> "Teddy Roosevelt advised that we should speak softly but carry a big stick. Now that we have the stick we need to pay more attention to the first part of his admonition, and we need not just to speak more softly but to listen more carefully."

(*spoke in French*)

It is no offence to our friends to tell them to listen to the international community and act with the Security Council.

The Arab Group had expressed the hope that there would be no new draft resolution. Such a draft would now be pointless, as it would arrive half way through the process, when the inspectors are already prepared to return to Iraq to carry out their mission. However if — God forbid — a resolution were to be adopted by the Council, it should be devoid of any bellicose dimension that might lead to a new unilateralist concept of the settlement of international disputes. In this respect, the French approach might be of assistance to the Council, as might the statement presented on behalf of the Secretary-General this morning.

We must also ensure that the great Powers, as much if not more so than the young countries, show respect for international law, if only to set an example. An ill-advised act of force would undermine all the principles of the United Nations Charter: respect for sovereignty, sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, as well as the prohibition of the use of force.

We believe that the Council, as the sole guarantor of peace and international security, today has a weighty historic responsibility in two respects. First, it owes it to itself to dispel all the doubts regarding the credibility of the Organization and prove that the world's affairs are not managed according to a double standard. The Council's second responsibility is to remain vigilant in order to avoid providing a sort of legal cover for unilateral tendencies or creating dangerous precedents that could turn out to be disastrous if they were ever transposed and applied in the resolution of other conflicts and to other areas of tension throughout the world.

As do all other peace-loving countries, Tunisia, which is known for its moderation, supports the call of the United Nations Secretary-General and other world leaders for restraint and for exploring all diplomatic channels in the search for a peaceful solution and to spare the Iraqi people further suffering.

We believe that the dialogue between the United Nations and Iraq remains the ideal forum for resolving all unsettled problems. In that regard, we reiterate our satisfaction at Iraq's decision to accept the unconditional return — I repeat, the unconditional return — of the inspectors, which constitutes, as the Secretary-General indicated at the beginning of the session of the General Assembly, a step towards détente in the region and the lifting of sanctions.

In that context, Tunisia reaffirms its attachment to the Arab position of opposing all strikes against an Arab State, while calling for the prevention of further suffering and harm to the Iraqi people and for the need to preserve Iraq's national integrity, its sovereignty and its territorial unity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

It is now 1.05 p.m. As I announced at the beginning of the meeting, I shall suspend the meeting now. The Council will resume its consideration of the item on its agenda at 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.